

INTERPRETATION BULLETIN NO. 77-1

The Bureau of Construction Codes has established an Interpretation Committee composed of the director, deputy director, code coordinator and division chiefs in an effort to bring uniformity to the interpretation and application of codes. The committee will review requests for interpretations and their comments will be published in the newsletter on a regular basis.

Question 1-77: Would a ramp located 89 feet and six inches from an entrance connected by a fourteen feet wide concrete walkway be an acceptable ramp to fulfill the requirements of Sec. 316.2 (General Rules, Rule 427)?

Answer: Yes.

Comment: Sec. 316.2 (General Rules, Rule 427) does not address proximity and, therefore, the intent of interior accessibility is achieved and satisfies the intent of access.

Question 2-77: Is an office located in the storage portion of a hardware store and intended to be used as the owner's personal office subject to the accessibility requirements of barrier free design?

Answer: Yes.

Comment: All areas must be accessible in accordance to Rule 427, Sec. 316.0 of the General Rules. Exception may be possible through the Barrier Free Design Board as an appeal.

Question 3-77: In conjunction with the requirements of Sec. 316.7 (General Rules, Rule 427), given a situation in which the plumbing code requires 4 water closets, the building is designed such that each restroom contains only one water closet, would all 4 of the restrooms be required to be accessible?

Answer: Yes.

Comment: All required fixtures shall be publicly accessible.

- a. Determine number of fixtures required by chart 1202.1 (BOCA Basic Plumbing Code, 1970 edition).
- b. Determine percentage of fixtures required by Rule 427, Sec. 316.7 of the General Rules.

Question 4-77: Is the minimum width of a ramp in the General Rules 44 inches?

Answer: Yes.

Comment: In the General Rules, Rule 445, Sec. 615.1 requires a ramp width to comply with requirements of exitways as prescribed in Sec. 616.2.1 of the BOCA Basic Building Code, 1975 edition. This section requires a minimum of 44 inches in all buildings. In the Uniform Building Code, refer to Sec. 3305.

Exception: Thirty-six (36) inches when only a single exit is required.

Question 5-77: Can historic buildings be exempted from the barrier free design rules by a local authority as indicated in Sec. 317 of the 1975 BOCA Basic Building Code?

Answer: No.

Comment: Act 177, PA, 1975, Sec. 2, paragraph 2 notes which facilities may be exempted. Sec. 5, paragraph 7 states an exception to a rule promulgated by the construction code commission relative to barrier free design may not be made by a local governmental unit, state department or agency, or person except as provided in sub-section (5).

Question 6-77: Regarding barrier free design rules, the use group designations vary between the BOCA Basic Building Code and the Uniform Building Code. Does the applicable code in each area govern as to definition of use groups?

Answer: No.

Comment: The General Rules govern. Act 230, PA 1972, Sec. 8(5) states that provisions of the code relating to requirements of barrier free design shall be effective throughout the state without local modifications.

Although the definitions for use groups are similar in the two model codes used in this state, the letter designations differ slightly. They are as follows:

- BOCA: R-1 (Residential, hotel)
R-2 (Residential, multi-family accommodating 6 to 20 persons)
B&T (Business & Temporary)
- UBC: R-1 (Hotel & apartment houses accommodating 11 or more persons)
R-3 Dwellings & Lodging houses
M Temporary or accessory buildings when not over 1,000 sq. feet in area.

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Question 7-77: Are there any tolerance levels permitted within the 17 inch requirement of the boiler height in Rule 427, Sec. 316.72 of the General Rules?

Answer: Yes.

Comment: Reasonable construction tolerance levels are allowed.